

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 14508 101923Z

64

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 087686

R 101847Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6292

S E C R E T LONDON 14508

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH DEFENSE SPENDING

REF: LONDON 14006 AND 14162; STATE 243139

1. WE SPOKE TO THOMSON AGAIN DEC. 7 ABOUT POSSIBILITY LONGER-TERM REDUCTIONS IN BRITISH DEFENSE SPENDING WOULD BE BROACHED IN FEBRUARY DEFENCE WHITE PAPER. HE STILL DOUBTED THAT THESE WOULD SURFACE IN WHITE PAPER, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT ABLE TO BE CATEGORIC AT THIS TIME. (COMMENT: AS WE NOTED IN LONDON 14162, THE FEBRUARY DEFENCE WHITE PAPER MAY WELL REFLECT SOME CHANGE IN LEVEL OF DEFENSE SPENDING FOR FY 75, I.E. NO INCREASE OVER FY 74 AND POSSIBLY SLIGHT DECREASE.)

2. DURING CONVERSATION DEC. 7, THOMSON DEVELOPED CONCEPT OF CURRENT INTERDEPARTMENTAL STUDY ON DEFENSE EXPENDITURES FOR POST-FY 76 PERIOD. THIS STUDY, HE SAID, HAS BEEN UNDERWAY FOR SOME TIME, INVOLVING FCO, MOD AND TREASURY. FCO ONLY RECENTLY BECAME ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN STUDY (AFTER THOMSON'S RETURN TO FCO). ALTHOUGH STUDY IS OF LONG STANDING, BLEAK ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR UK HAS GIVEN URGENCY TO CARRYING IT FORWARD, AND THOMSON NOTED THAT INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS OCCUR WITH FREQUENCY.

3. THOMSON SAID STUDY GROUP HAS NOT PROCEEDED FROM ANY

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LONDON 14508 101923Z

A PRIOR ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT AMOUNTS OF MONEY TO WHICH

STUDY CONCLUSIONS MUST BE TAILORED. FCO HOPES THAT THERE WILL BE NO FIXED MONETARY GUIDELINES BUT ARE NOT SURE THAT TREASURY WILL NOT INSIST ON SOME. REALISTICALLY, IT MUST BE EXPECTED, THOMSON INDICATED, THAT RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR DEFENSE WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY TIGHT. THOMSON SAID THAT FCO HOPES IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO WORK OUT A SET OF NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITIES FOR UK AND THAT ADEQUATE FUNDS WILL BE ALLOCATED TO SUPPORT THOSE OBJECTIVES. IF, AS APPEARS PROBABLE, THERE WILL HAVE TO BE REDUCTIONS, FCO HOPES THAT THEY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN LOGICAL WAY IN CONSONANCE WITH BRITAIN'S C*REFULLY*THOUGHT-OUT AND IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC INTERESTS.

4. FINALLY, THOMSON SAID THAT IT WAS *OPED TO AVOID PRODUCING A "REVIEW" SUCH AS LABOR CARRIED**OUT IN THE 1960.S WITH ITS IMPLICATIONS OF SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURES IN DEFENSE POLICY.

ANNENBERG

**

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY BUDGET, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: mcintyresh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LONDON14508
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P750033-1296
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731233/aaaaaycw.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 73 LONDON 14006, 73 LONDON 14162, 73 STATE 243139
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: mcintyresh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jul-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <13-Sep-2001 by mcintyresh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRITISH DEFENSE SPENDING
TAGS: MARR, UK, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005